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United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to resolution 53/78 E of 1998, by which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the General Assembly on the disarmament information programme for the period July 1998 to June 2000.

The report outlines the resources and activities that the Department for Disarmament Affairs has developed to carry out a reinvigorated outreach programme in its substantive priority areas of:

(a) Weapons of mass destruction;

(b) Conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons.

In implementing its programme, the Department has increasingly exploited the electronic medium. It has developed an extensive web site and used sophisticated desktop publishing software to make information available to a wide spectrum of users.

In keeping with the Secretary-General's policy of strengthening ties with civil society, the disarmament information programme has intensified its interaction with non-governmental organizations and research institutes.

* A/55/150.

** The report was prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/78 E by which the Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session the activities of the Programme during the previous two years (from July 1998 to June 2000) and the activities of the Programme contemplated by the system for the following two years.

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I. Introduction

1. By resolution 53/78 E, adopted without a vote on 4 December 1998, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session a report covering both the implementation of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme by the United Nations system during the previous two years and the activities of the Programme contemplated for the following two years. The programme, which is administered principally by the Monitoring, Database and Information Branch of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, was strengthened by the recruitment in 1999 of a new Political Affairs Officer at the P-3 level. An addendum will be issued to the present report providing information regarding the status of the Voluntary Trust Fund.

A. Priorities

2. The information programme reflects the priorities of the work programme of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. Thus, a continuing priority is the area of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. The following sections indicate how the programme has addressed this concern through publications, symposia, exhibits and other activities, especially in connection with the preparatory process for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Conference itself. The Secretary-General's proposal to convene a major international conference that would help to identify ways to eliminate nuclear dangers, made in his report to the Millennium Assembly (A/54/2000), may also give impetus to this trend. Another priority area is that of conventional weapons, the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons and the disarmament-development perspective. These concerns are also evident in the work described below and will certainly have an impact on the future programme, given the fact that the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is scheduled for mid-2001, and the Secretary-General has recently established a high-level steering group on disarmament and development.

B. Impact of electronic technology

3. As foreseen in the 1998 report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme (A/53/161 and Add.1 and Corr.1), technology has had a major impact. Small, non-sales publications are immediately made available electronically on the Department's web site, once they have received clearance, while their availability in hard copy may take several months. Sophisticated desktop publishing software has permitted the Department to design the covers of such publications, thereby saving considerable time and money.

C. Civil society

4. In keeping with the Secretary-General's desire to strengthen the United Nations ties with civil society, the programme has intensified its interaction with various segments of the public, principally non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutes, over the past two years, as described below. The areas of the Department's work that have generated the most interest among specialized NGOs and institutes are nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and small arms and light weapons; thus, the high level of interaction can be expected to be maintained as the results of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty are closely reviewed and preparations are made for the 2001 conference on small arms.

II. Information and education resources

A. Publications since July 1998

5. The Department has expanded the volume of its publications output since the previous report. As mentioned above, it has made use of its web site to speed up publication of some material. In view of the fact that it does not have the human resources necessary to typeset all potential publications, it has, on occasion, shared publication of symposium presentations with the organization with which it collaborated in mounting the symposium. Lack of resources within the Department has hampered the timely distribution of publications, and lack of

resources in the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services has seriously delayed the reproduction of some publications.

6 The publications listed below have been produced since July 1998. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are posted on the Department's web site.

(a) *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, vol. 23 (1998) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.1) and vol. 24 (1999) (United Nations publication, sales No. E.00.IX.1); forthcoming in all languages;

(b) *Study Series: Small Arms*, Number: 28 (1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.7); forthcoming in all languages;

(c) *Occasional papers*:

(i) *Towards a world free from nuclear weapons: Why South Africa gave up the nuclear option/Vers un monde exempt d'armes nucléaires: pourquoi l'Afrique du Sud a abandonné l'option nucléaire*, Number: 1 (July 1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.4/F.99.IX.4);

(ii) *Missile development and its impact on global security*, Number: 2 (September 1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.8); French forthcoming;

(iii) *Symposium on nuclear doctrines*, Number: 3 (December 1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.IX.2); French forthcoming;

(d) **DDA Update*, October 1998; June, September, December 1999; March 2000;

(e) **Disarmament Resolutions and Decisions of the United Nations General Assembly*, fifty-third session, fifty-fourth session;

(f) *Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Quarterly Newsletter, Oct-Dec 1999*, Number 24;

(g) *Forging Security and Development Initiatives*, a brochure of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC);

(h) *Ad hoc publications*:

(i) *Workshop on Weapons Collection and Integration of Former Combatants into Civil Society/Seminario Taller sobre recolección de armas e integración de excombatientes en la sociedad civil* (1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.6/S.99.IX.6);

(ii) **2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — 24 April-19 May, New York* (United Nations publication, 00-27462); French forthcoming;

(iii) **2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — 24 April-19 May, New York/ Conférence d'examen des parties au Traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires — 24 avril-19 mai 2000 — New York* (2000) (DPI/2085) (drafted and typeset in the Department for Disarmament Affairs).

7. The following publications were also issued in the reporting period, in cooperation with the NGO Committee on Disarmament:

(a) *1998: The Future of Disarmament* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.2), English only;

(b) *1999: The World at a Critical Turning Point* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.5), English only.

B. Web site

8. In order to coordinate and consolidate United Nations web resources related to disarmament and international security issues, the web site of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, first established in 1996, has been incorporated into the "United Nations and Disarmament" web site. This site now includes a set of electronic links, such as: Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee);[1] Disarmament Commission (UNDC);[2] Conference on Disarmament (CD);[3] Department for Disarmament Affairs (UNDDA);[4] and United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).[5]

9. The web site provides access to the individual web sites of all five Branches of the Department: CD Secretariat and Conference Support (Geneva); Weapons of Mass Destruction; Conventional Arms (including Practical Disarmament Measures); Monitoring, Database and Information; and Regional Disarmament. Among other useful electronic resources

is a series of regularly updated materials: relevant statements by the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General; statements by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs; relevant press releases; and databases on disarmament resolutions and decisions, on the status of multilateral arms regulation and disarmament agreements, and on reports submitted under article 7 by the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

10. In view of the growing necessity to achieve multilingual parity, the Department for Disarmament Affairs has posted a number of documents in several of the official languages of the United Nations. However, the further multilingual development, coordination, production and management of information content on the web site cannot be sustained without a substantial increase in the level of investment in information technology and human resources.

C. Exhibits

11. As part of the observance of United Nations Day in 1998 at the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Geneva Branch organized a display of publications and other information materials produced by the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

12. The exhibit entitled *The United Nations and Nuclear Disarmament: Achievements on the Way to a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World*, produced by several NGOs and co-sponsored by the Department in the framework of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme, travelled to Geneva and Vienna in 1998. Plans are being made for it to be displayed in other places as well.

13. In 1999, the Department and UNICEF collaborated in the production and display of a travelling exhibit entitled *Taking Aim at Small Arms: Defending Children's Rights*, with the financial support of the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Andorra to the United Nations. The purpose of the exhibit was to highlight the dramatic impact on women and children of the excessive availability of small arms as well as the activities through which the United Nations attempts to address the problem, and to promote further governmental and public remedial action. The exhibit opened at United Nations Headquarters on 15 July at an official ceremony that featured the Deputy Secretary-General and world-renowned film actor and producer Michael Douglas as Messenger of Peace. It was then displayed at UNICEF House in New York. Subsequently, it travelled to The Hague, Andorra and Lomé, and demand for bookings continues.

14. In February 2000, the Under-Secretaries-General of the Department of Public Information and the Department for Disarmament Affairs began the process of refurbishing the permanent disarmament exhibit segment of the official guided tour for public visitors to the Organization. The revamping is expected to be completed and the exhibit inaugurated on 23 October 2000. The exhibit will extend the message to the public that the United Nations has important roles to play not only in the field of nuclear disarmament and other weapons of mass destruction, but also in the field of conventional weapons, small arms and landmines.

III. Information and education activities

A. Symposia

15. In 1998, the Department initiated a series of discussions on topics of interest in the field of arms limitation and disarmament (see chart below) with a view to broadening understanding and facilitating a meaningful discussion of the issues among Member States and civil society. In most instances, the presentations made at the symposia were or are being developed into publications and placed on the Department's web site in order to extend their outreach.

26 October 1998	*Symposium on De-Alerting of Nuclear Weapons.* The first symposium was launched with a panel of four experts.
22 April 1999	*Symposium on Missile Development and Its Impact on Global Security.* Experts from five regions addressed different aspects of the issue. (See Department for Disarmament Affairs Occasional Papers, Number 2.)

20 July 1999	*Symposium on Disarmament and Development*, held in collaboration with the Departments of Economic and Social Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Economists Allied for Arms Reduction (ECAAR). It was the first event of this kind to be held under the aegis of the newly established high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development. (The presentations have been published in *ECAAR Papers: United Nations Symposium on Disarmament and Development*, ECAAR, 2000.)
18 October 1999	*Symposium on Nuclear Doctrines.* Following a suggestion by the representative of the Solomon Islands during the First Committee at the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, a panel of four international scholars spoke on the subject (see Department for Disarmament Affairs Occasional Papers, Number 3).
24 March 2000	*Symposium on Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention: International Cooperation and Exchanges in the Field of Biotechnology.* In partnership with the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) and the Department, the symposium commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Biological Weapons Convention. It was coordinated with a similar event organized in Geneva by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). (A Department for Disarmament Affairs Occasional Paper will be published and be posted on the Department's web site.)
1 May 2000	*Arms Control and Disarmament: A New Conceptual Approach.* The Department, together with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), sponsored a panel discussion. Speakers included six expert panellists. (Joint publication to be edited by SIPRI and produced by DDA)
21 June 2000	*Restructuring of the Global Arms Industry and Its Implications.* Second in the series under the auspices of the Steering Group on Disarmament and Development, the Department organized, with ECAAR and the World Policy Institute, a panel dialogue. Five expert panellists participated. (Presentations to be published by ECAAR)

B. Messenger of peace activities

16. On 30 July 1998, Michael Douglas was appointed as a Messenger of Peace by the Secretary-General. It was announced that he would focus on two issues: disarmament and human rights, concentrating on the right to human security. In addition to his official activities as Messenger of Peace, set out in the chart below, Mr. Douglas uses the opportunities of interviews with the press to inject messages about nuclear disarmament and small arms control.

27 June 1998 (just prior to appointment)	Vienna	Participated in United Nations commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by reciting the Preamble of the 1948 Universal Declaration at a Human Rights Assembly. Delivered a short speech on the right to human security at a panel discussion which called upon the world to unite to "make nuclear weapons a horror of the past".
25 September 1998	United Nations Head-quarters	Gave keynote address to *Seminar on Initiatives to Stop the Spread and Unlawful Use of Small Arms*, sponsored by the British American Security Information Council (BASIC), calling for responsible ownership of guns to protect children and more governmental control to prevent criminal use, including barrel marking. "Wherever arms flow, violence follows. Bullets replace ballots as the solution to political disputes." Highlighted many of the efforts the

		United Nations is making and called for all countries to follow that lead.
30 October 1998	United Nations Head-quarters	Addressed the *Women's International Forum*, calling for ridding the world of nuclear weapons and for greater curbs on the flows of small arms in order to protect the civilian population.
10 December 1998	United Nations Head-quarters	In commemorating Human Rights Day, Mr. Douglas, with two other Messengers of Peace, Ms. Anna Cataldi and Mr. Luciano Pavarotti, joined the Secretary-General to present the *Children's Human Rights Passports*. Mr. Douglas highlighted the right of all children to security and development.
20 July 1999	United Nations Head-quarters	With the Deputy Secretary-General and the Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, the Ambassador of Andorra to the United Nations and the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, launched the Department for Disarmament Affairs/UNICEF travelling exhibit entitled *Taking Aim at Small Arms: Defending Children's Rights*. Spoke as an American concerned about gun violence in the United States and in conflicts around the world. Stressed that "whether children are killed or they did the killing, still they are the victims."
10 and 11 October 1999	Gramsh, Albania	At the Department's request, visited Department for Disarmament Affairs/UNDP Pilot Project to observe a demonstration of the destruction of weapons collected and community development projects given in exchange. Visited region of Elbasan to encourage citizens to extend project to region. Public events in Tirana drew the attention of the national and international community to the need to fund projects.
20 March 2000	London	Visit to All Party Committee on Non-Proliferation and Global Security at House of Commons, called for the help of members of Parliament for further reductions in nuclear weapons. Met with Mr. Robin Cook, Foreign Secretary and Mr. Peter Hain, Foreign Commonwealth Office Affairs Minister, urging United Kingdom intercession with the United States and the Russian Federation to reactivate the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) process.

It is expected that the Messenger of Peace will play a very important role in the lead-up to the 2001 conference as the Department seeks to keep the public informed of small arms issues.

C. Liaison with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

17. UNIDIR works in close relationship with the Department for Disarmament Affairs pursuant to article 1 of the Statute of the Institute.[6] The Department is responsible for the selection of the Institute's Board of Trustees and organizes its meetings. (The members of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters serve as the Board of Trustees of the Institute.) The Statute also requires UNIDIR to consult with the Department on budgetary matters. In addition, the Department assists the Institute in the preparation of the two reports that it is required to submit to the General Assembly.

18. The Department coordinates its outreach activities with UNIDIR, especially in regard to publications and symposia. On 25 and 26 August 1999, the Department and UNIDIR partnered in Geneva an international meeting of experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. The symposium was held partly in response to General Assembly resolution 53/70 on the same subject, introduced in 1998 by the Russian Federation and adopted without a vote. Sixty-eight governmental and non-governmental experts from 40 States attended the meeting. The aim of the meeting was to raise awareness among Member States of the

possible negative potential of such technologies and to initiate multilateral discussions.

D. Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters: discussion on education

19. At its January/February 2000 session, the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters discussed the topic of education for disarmament and non-proliferation. Faced with the complacency of Governments and the public about the dangers still facing the global community, particularly from nuclear weapons, the Board recommended that the Secretary-General consider the possibility of conducting a study on disarmament education. At its July session, the Board put forward a draft mandate that would cover primary grades through specialized post-graduate levels, and incorporate the latest in long-distance learning techniques. In order to give a strong voice to the NGO/education and non-proliferation community, the Board invited the director of the Peace Education Campaign of the Hague Appeal for Peace (an NGO) and the Chairman of the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP)/ Commission for Disarmament Education, Conflict Resolution and Peace to address it on the issue.

E. International Association of University Presidents

20. The Department continued its support and participated in meetings held by the IAUP/Commission for Disarmament Education, Conflict Resolution and Peace.

F. Briefings

21. At the request of the Public Inquiries Unit of the Department of Public Information, staff of the Department undertook approximately 30 briefing engagements per year for the benefit of:

(a) Student visitors in the framework of university programmes dealing with the United Nations;

(b) United Nations Association members from various countries;

(c) Students preparing for the Model United Nations exercises;

(d) Visiting members of NGOs.

IV. Cooperation with civil society

22. The Department carried out the activities described below. In addition, it maintained close contact on an ongoing basis with a number of major NGO coalitions, among them Abolition 2000 and Reaching Critical Will, and research institutes, and followed the proceedings of the Millennium Forum, held from 22 to 26 May 1999.

A. Collaboration in activities of non-governmental organizations

23. The Department cooperated with the NGO Committee on Disarmament[7] and the Department of Public Information in conducting a number of panel discussions in the fall of 1998 and 1999 during Disarmament Week, and in the spring of 1999 during the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and during the session of the Disarmament Commission. Discussions covered a wide range of topics. Issues related to weapons of mass destruction — especially nuclear weapons — were the focus of many of the panel presentations, among which were the New Agenda Coalition, the Tokyo Forum report, implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, de-alerting, and technical and political aspects of depleted uranium weaponry. Several discussions focused on a new NGO initiative, Global Action to Prevent War, which extended its reach to the 9,000 people attending the Hague Appeal for Peace Conference in May 1999. Humanitarian and development concerns figured in discussions on the implications of small arms proliferation, regional initiatives in Latin America and Africa and the relationship between disarmament and development. The Department facilitated the publication of material arising from the joint events with the NGO Committee on Disarmament.[8] Edited transcripts of discussions are available on http://www.igc.org/disarm/forum.html.

B. Representation at meetings of non-governmental organizations

24. At a meeting convened by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines in Dublin, Ireland, from 15 to 18 September 1998 to prepare for the production of *Landmine Monitor Report 1999*, a representative of the Department made a presentation on the role of the United Nations in assisting States parties to the Mine-Ban Convention with regard to reporting on their transparency measures under article 7 of the Convention.

25. The Department was represented at the Hague Appeal for Peace Conference, held in The Hague from 11 to 16 May 1999. At the invitation of the organizers, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, who was unable to attend, videotaped a statement entitled "Civil society and the verification of disarmament", which was shown at a workshop. The Department's representative at the Conference moderated a panel discussion on the challenges to disarmament in the twenty-first century.

C. Facilitating participation of non-governmental organizations in intergovernmental meetings

26. In collaboration with States parties, the Department facilitated NGO participation in the 1998 and 1999 sessions of the Preparatory Committee of the 2000 Review Conference and the Conference itself, implementing a decision of the Committee to make time available at each session of the Committee and at the Conference for NGO representatives to address delegations. This represented a considerable advance over the 1995 Review Conference, at which NGOs had been permitted only to attend open meetings. A decision on the modalities for NGO participation in the preparatory process for the 2001 United Nations Conference on illicit trade in small arms is still pending.

V. Regional activities

27. In a series of resolutions adopted at its fifty-fourth session, the General Assembly reaffirmed the usefulness of the Department's three regional centres — for Africa, for Asia and the Pacific, and for Latin America and the Caribbean — in carrying out dissemination and educational programmes. The Department has worked through its regional centres in a variety of ways to promote dialogue and confidence-building in their respective regions.[9]

VI. Training

A. United Nations Fellowship Programme

28. As mandated by the General Assembly, the Department continued to implement the United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services programme. The programme, designed to promote expertise in disarmament in more Member States, particularly developing countries, trained 50 diplomats in the period covered (for details, see A/55/152).

B. Internships in the Department

29. In both New York and Geneva, the Department hosted and trained graduate students serving in different internship programmes at the United Nations (see chart below). The interns were distributed among the different Branches of the Department according to their interests and the needs of the Department. Their assignments included: assisting in the organization and reporting on disarmament-related bodies, preparing background notes and bibliographies on subjects of topical interest, summarizing academic journals, and organizing and advertising symposia and panels.

United Nations Graduate Internship Programme	4-6 full-time interns	period of 2-3 months	3 times a year
Monterey Institute of International Studies/ Centre for Non-proliferation Studies	one full-time intern/New York	duration of 6 months	twice yearly
	one full-time intern/Geneva	duration of 8 months	once a year
Fordham University, New York	1 part-time intern	duration 2-3 months	once a year

Nova Southeastern Law School, Florida	one (or two) full-time intern(s)	duration 2-3 months	twice yearly
Columbia Univ./ School of International and Public Affairs, NY	two full-time interns	duration 2 months	once a year
Armenian General Benevolent Union, NY	one full-time intern	duration 2 months	once a year

C. Cooperative monitoring workshops

30. In collaboration with the Cooperative Monitoring Center of the Sandia National Laboratories of the United States Department of Energy, the Department for Disarmament Affairs sponsored four workshops on cooperative monitoring for arms control, disarmament and other cooperative security measures over two days at Headquarters (9 and 10 February 2000). The workshops consisted of a portable demonstration of cooperative monitoring technologies. The 60 participants included United Nations staff from several departments (the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC)), diplomats, members of the press and NGOs. Plans are under way to sponsor the workshops in Geneva for the benefit of representatives to the Conference on Disarmament, as well as the staff of the Geneva Branch and UNIDIR, members of the press and NGOs early in 2001.

VII. Activities of the Department of Public Information

31. In accordance with its mandate and in cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Public Information continued to publicize United Nations activities in the field of arms limitation and disarmament.

A. Radio

32. The Department of Public Information provided extensive coverage on various aspects of disarmament and related issues in its news bulletins and current affairs magazines in 15 languages. Its radio news programmes carried reports on the work of disarmament bodies — the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee, the preparatory process leading up to the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Conference itself, and the activities of the parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. They covered a range of issues: nuclear matters, the impact of light weapons and small arms on socio-economic development and United Nations efforts in demining. In addition to news bulletins and current affairs programmes, the Department produced 30 newsmagazines and 14 feature programmes in both official and non-official languages for regional and worldwide dissemination.

B. Television

33. Disarmament issues were featured in a range of the Department of Public Information's video products: *UN in Action*, the ongoing series of newsmagazines distributed to more than 100 countries, and *World Chronicle*, the United Nations television discussion programme, which included interviews with the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and the Secretary-General of the 2000 Review Conference. In addition, the Department of Public Information, working closely with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, finalized the production of a documentary on illicit transfers of small arms. Entitled *Armed to the Teeth*, the documentary has been produced in English in a 28-minute version for the public, including schools and other educational institutions, and a 55-minute version for television broadcast. Other language versions will be produced later in 2000. The documentary is expected to contribute significantly to the promotional campaign to raise awareness of small arms issues prior to the 2001 conference. By the end of the year, it will be available in French and Spanish as well as English.

C. Printed materials

34. The Department of Public Information carried out extensive press coverage on disarmament topics, issuing almost 200 press releases in English and over 150 in French, as well as background notes, on many of the activities recorded in the earlier sections of the present report. In addition to press materials, the Department promoted awareness of disarmament through its regular publications: the *UN Chronicle* and the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, the two booklets "UN in brief" and "Image and reality", and the reference paper "United Nations conferences and observances". *Basic Facts about the United Nations*, which is currently being updated, also contains an extensive section covering the full range of disarmament issues and the role of the United Nations in this field. The UN News Service on the Internet, produced by the Department, has also provided regular news reports on disarmament meetings and issues.

35. In cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the Department of Public Information produced a brochure on the Treaty in English, French and Spanish, with financial support from the Government of Finland. In cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Public Information has been involved in the production of publications on landmines.

D. Non-governmental organizations

36. Disarmament issues were also highlighted at the weekly briefings to NGOs, organized by the Department of Public Information at United Nations Headquarters, on such topics as: the campaign against the illicit arms trade, implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and Global Action to Prevent War. In September 2000, the Department of Public Information/NGO Annual Conference will give special attention to the issue of small arms trafficking.

E. Public inquiries

37. The Department of Public Information, through its Public Inquiries Unit, responded to 832 inquiries on disarmament-related issues. In addition, the Unit's new publication, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the UN", introduced disarmament and related issues to high school students. The Group Programmes and Community Liaison Unit arranged 40 briefings on the subject of disarmament that were attended by over 2,100 participants, and the disarmament exhibit, a feature of the guided tour route, was attended by nearly 900,000 visitors during the reporting period. As mentioned above, the exhibit is being refurbished in close collaboration with the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

F. United Nations Information Centres

38. The 78 United Nations Information Centres, services and offices produced or translated and disseminated information material and documents related to disarmament. They replicated the Department's information programmes and launched their own initiatives, usually in cooperation with local NGOs, academic institutions or the media. They also played an important but often overlooked part in organizing or supporting local, regional and international meetings and events on disarmament, such as the International Conference on Sustainable Disarmament for Sustainable Development, held in Brussels on 12 and 13 October 1998, meetings of the United Nations regional centres, and meetings on landmine issues in Cairo, Tokyo, Washington and Tunis.

G. Other activities

39. The Department of Public Information organized two programmes to familiarize the press with disarmament subjects: briefings for the United States National Conference of Editorial Writers and for African journalists. These programmes brought prominent journalists and the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs together, thereby providing an opportunity to disseminate information on disarmament and to listen to the concerns of writers of leading newspapers.

Notes

[1] Go to http://www.un.org/ga/, then follow the link to the First Committee.

[2] http://www.un.org/Depts/dda/UNDC/UNDC.htm.

[3] http://www.unog.ch/disarm/dconf.htm.

[4] http://www.un.org/Depts/dda/DDAHome.htm.

[5] http://www.unog.ch/UNIDIR/.

[6] General Assembly resolution 39/148 H, annex.

[7] The Internet address is http://www.igc.org/disarm.

[8] *The World at a Critical Turning Point*, New York, 1999 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.5).

[9] In this connection, see the following reports of each of the regional centres: A/54/332 and Add.1 and A/55/171 (Africa), A/54/255 and Add.1 (Asia and the Pacific), and A/54/310 and Add.1 and A/55/169 (Latin America and the Caribbean).